



CITY OF DAHLONEGA

Council Work Session Minutes

March 19, 2020 4:00 PM

<p>PRESENT – Council Chamber Mayor Sam Norton Council Member Helen Hardman Council Member Mitchell Ridley</p>	<p>PRESENT – Council Chamber City Manager Bill Schmid City Clerk Mary Csukas Director Melody Marlowe Director Kevin Herit Director Mark Buchanan Marshal Jeff Branyon</p>	<p>Present – Council Chamber City Attorney Doug Parks Director Shannon Ferguson DDA Program Assistant Cari McDuffie -</p>
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<p>PRESENT – Zoom Platform Council Member Ron Larson Council Member JoAnne Taylor Council Member Roman Gaddis Council Member Johnny Ariemma</p>	<p>PRESENT – Zoom Platform</p>	<p>PRESENT – Zoom Platform Tourism Director Sam McDuffie</p>
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Mayor Norton opened the meeting at 4:00 p.m

PRESENTATIONS

1. Presentation to City Council - Community Helping Place Free Medical Clinic, Paula Payne, CHP Clinic Director- Ms. Payne was not able to attend the meeting.
2. Barn Quilt Design, Lynn Sylvester
 Barn Quilt Trail in Lumpkin County. Sam McDuffie is on board with this project. Chestatee Artists would like to sponsor the first Barn Quilt in Downtown Dahlonega on the Square. The design open to suggestions.
 - o Council Member Larson suggests a UNG partnership for this project.
 - o Ms. Sylvester stated these are temporary painted wood structures adhered to the proposed site.
 - o Director Ferguson would discuss the quilt idea with the Downtown Development Board.
 - o The barn quilt trail will proceed through the City of Dahlonega into Lumpkin County.
 - o The Historic Preservation Committee will review the quilt design.
 - o Council Member Gaddis agreed that the design process of the quilt should be through the Historic Preservation Committee.
 - o Ms. Sysvester would also need to involve the Downtown Development and owner of the property and Lumpkin County as required.
 - o Mayor Norton informed Ms. Sylvester that each owner of a property has the right to decide on the design of a quilt on their structure. Three proposed designs should be presented to the Council and then, in turn, to the Historic Preservation Committee. All quilts need to pass the sign ordinance.requirements.
3. Employee Compensation and Benefits Review, Whit Perrin Wright, Whit Perrin Wright Consulting LLC, Melody Marlowe, Finance Director

Whit Perrin Wright Consulting, LLC were contracted to review the City’s compensation and benefit plans based on the current market, based on population size, geographic proximity to the City of Dahlonega, and other characteristics such as tourism and the presence of a college to ensure the City is competitive in our market.

- The summary showed some pay ranges are below the market, and a few are slightly above the market. The goal is to implement the recommended pay structure on a case by case basis and phased-in approach to the relative grade increase. The healthcare offerings are very competitive overall. A possible offering of tuition assistance may allow for a more competitive edge in our market.
 - In 2019, City Employees received a pay increase budgeted at 3% based on performance reviews.
 - Implementation of the first step in the recommended pay structure is to bring employees paid below the new pay grades to their new grade minimums. An employee by employee review will be needed to address individual situations. No action taken.
4. FY2019 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) and Audit, Chris Hollifield, Rushton and Company CPAs

The City engaged the services of Rushton and Company CPA to audit the financial state for the year ending September 30, 2019.

- The report found no material weakness, and no significant deficiencies were noted in the internal controls of the City of Dahlonega. No instances of material noncompliance or other matters that are required to be reported were stressed.
- Mayor Norton reminded Council that the audit is to test our processes to ensure that the balances are accurate.
- Council Member Ariemma inquired into the status of the Water Sewer Funds, which are in a healthy place in comparison to five or six years ago.
- Council Member Larson praised the finance department for another fantastic financial audit.
- Mayor Norton reminded Council that the City is currently fiscally sound with available funds in a slightly volatile market.

BOARDS AND COMMITTEE'S:

- 5. Cemetery Committee January 2020, Chris Worick, Cemetery Committee Chairman
No information outside of the report.
- 6. Downtown Development Authority, Shannon Ferguson, Executive Director
 - Coronavirus update on business owners in the Downtown Development Authority footprint.
- 7. Main Street, Carolyn McDuffie, Main Street Project Coordinator
 - Event cancellations were updated
- 8. Tourism Board Report, Sam McDuffie, Director
 - Dahlonega, Ga, was voted sixth in the Southern Living Best Mountain Towns 2020.
 - Tourism rebranding of the Logo – Discover Dahlonega.
 - The cost of the rebranding will be minimal.
 - Bathroom renovations are in the discussion stage.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS:

- 9. Marshal's Report February 2020, Jeff Branyon, Marshal
 - The parking meter process is firmly in place.
 - Protocols and Policies will be rolled out in the coming months and will evolve with time.
- 10. Community Development – February 2020 Department Report, Kevin Herrit, Director
 - Chair Persons suspended the Planning and HPC meetings due to pandemic
 - Construction projects are not on hold. A Special Called Hearing can be called as needed.
 - Online permitting will begin within the month.
 - Zoning Map is 95% complete, execution expected within the month.
- 11. Financial Reports (January 2020) - Melody Marlowe, Finance Director
- 12. Financial Services Department Report, Melody Marlowe, Finance Director
 - BS&A Software is complete and will be live next Monday

- The City has a healthy reserve, but staff will review cost-saving measures during the pandemic
 - Sales tax will be down due to the pandemic.
 - Water and sewer revenues will be down by at least 30%.
13. Public Works Department Report – February 2020, Mark Buchanan, PW Director/City Engineer
- The City parks are sanitized daily.
14. Water & Wastewater Treatment Department Report February 2020, John Jarrard, Water/Wastewater Treatment Director
- Owens Farm lift station near completion.
 - Achasta lift station will begin in the next week.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION:

15. City Council Coronavirus Update
- Municipal Court will be postponed for the next month.
 - Two water bill drop off locations in town.
 - We are assisting with the economic support of local business owners.
 - Mayor Norton stated that our priority is the safety and health of our Citizens.
 - Council Member Gaddis stated the need to create an ordinance for the state of emergency.
 - Mayor Norton requested a draft ordinance state of emergency and special called meeting.
 - Hotel/Motel Funds' contractual distribution will not be affected by pandemic at this time.
 - Council will review the Chamber contract as the pandemic evolves and the dollar amount available for distribution.
16. 2020-11: Special Events and Demonstrations Regulations; Exhibit A: Permit Requirement/ Application/ Processing, Doug Parks, City Attorney
- An ordinance about special events and demonstration regulations.
 - Establish permit regulations, applications, and processing procedures.
 - City Staff recommends Ordinance 2020-11: Exhibit A.
 - The added insurance requirement includes a waiver capability by the City Manager.
17. Ordinance 2020-17 Moratorium regarding special event applications and permits, Doug Parks
- Moratorium prohibiting the acceptance of applications and issuance of special event permits from March 20, 2020, through April 30, 2020, as to Ordinance 2020-11.
 - Ordinance 2020-17 relates to the CDC guidance due to the coronavirus.
 - Council Member Taylor and Hardman are ready to extend this ordinance as needed.
 - Mayor Norton stated that Ordinance 2020-17 could be adjusted as needed.
18. Dahlenega Telecommuting Policy 2020, Doug Parks, City Attorney
- The City of Dahlenega supports telecommuting work arrangements and allows the City Manager to implement these arrangements, where appropriate, for eligible employees.
19. Ordinance 2020-12: Vehicle Signs, Doug Parks, City Attorney
- An opportunity to allow advertisements on the vehicles.
20. Ordinance 2020-08 Short Term Rentals, Kevin Herrit, AICP, Director of Community Development
- Short Term Rentals will be moved to a future work session.
21. City Park Trail Paving, Vince Hunsinger, Capital Projects Manager
- Funds relocation of \$20,000 to allow for City Park Trail Paving. Dahlenega City Park will be closed for the duration of the project.
22. Contract Award Recommendation – Project #2020-011, Mark Buchanan, City Engineer
- The parking expansion project of \$35,000 next to Building A for city staff
23. Contract Award Recommendation – Project #2020-012, Mark Buchanan, City Engineer
- Memorial Park Cemetery resurfacing project \$ 36,433.
24. City of Dahlenega Marshal's Job Description
- Updated City Marshal job description.

COMMENTS – PLEASE LIMIT TO THREE MINUTES

Clerk Comments – No comments

City Manager Comments – President Trump requires Government agencies to pay leave to staff as needed for COVID 19 situations.

City Attorney Comments – No comments

City Council Comments

- Council Members discussed the development of these zoom meetings

Mayor Comments

- Mayor Norton supported the staff dedicated to the City during this coronavirus.
- The City Attorney contract was awarded on August 2, 1982, but it is not available for review.
- Attorney Parks stated that his and Judge Law's contracts, were renewed in 2007

Mayor Norton adjournment the meeting at 7:02 p.m.